



Senate

General Assembly

February Session, 2014

File No. 172

Senate Bill No. 213

Senate, March 27, 2014

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs reported through SEN. LEONE of the 27th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE VETERANS' OPPORTUNITIES PILOT PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2014*) (a) There is established
2 within the Labor Department the Veterans' Opportunities pilot
3 program. The program shall consist of (1) grants from the department
4 to nonprofit housing agencies to hire job placement specialists trained
5 to understand the employment challenges and advantages unique to
6 veterans, and (2) a state-wide coordinator within the department to
7 manage the network of employment services for veterans.

8 (b) The Labor Commissioner, in consultation with the
9 Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs, shall develop criteria for a
10 nonprofit housing agency to be eligible for grants under the program.
11 Such criteria shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) the region
12 served by the agency, (2) the demonstrated need of homeless veterans
13 within such region for job placement, (3) the agency's ability to support
14 and implement the work of a job placement specialist, and (4) such

15 other factors as may be relevant. Any agency receiving a grant under
16 the program shall, prior to offering employment to a job placement
17 specialist, submit to the Labor Commissioner and the Commissioner of
18 Veterans' Affairs, the resume of the person it is intending to employ,
19 and said commissioners shall approve or disapprove such hiring not
20 later than ten business days after submittal of such resume.

21 (c) The Labor Commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner
22 of Veterans' Affairs, shall designate a state-wide coordinator to
23 manage the network of employment services for veterans. The duties
24 of the coordinator shall include (1) overseeing the work of the job
25 placement specialists hired pursuant to the program established by
26 this section, (2) identifying and coordinating employment specialists
27 and job developers throughout the state who work with veterans, (3)
28 centralizing and facilitating job referrals, (4) organizing a network of
29 employers who will hire and support homeless veterans or veterans at
30 risk of homelessness, (5) providing information to employers about
31 resources and incentives available to those who employ veterans, (6)
32 supporting efforts to automatically transfer military occupational
33 certifications to the private sector, and (7) doing all that is necessary to
34 provide homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness with
35 effective employment services. The coordinator shall be housed within
36 the Labor Department, but shall provide monthly reports and updates
37 to the Labor Commissioner and the Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs.

38 (d) The Labor Commissioner, in consultation with the
39 Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs, shall provide a report in
40 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
41 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
42 cognizance of matters relating to labor, veterans and housing,
43 regarding the establishment, implementation and results of the
44 Veterans' Opportunities pilot program. Such report shall be submitted
45 not later than January 1, 2015, and shall include any recommendations
46 for changes to said program.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	New section
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VA *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 15 \$	FY 16 \$
Labor Dept.	GF - Cost	65,000	See Below
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	23,829	See Below

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill establishes the Veterans' Opportunities pilot program within the Department of Labor (DOL) as of July 1, 2014. This results in a cost of \$88,829 in FY 15.

The bill requires the Veteran's Opportunity pilot program to establish a state-wide coordinator within DOL to manage the network of employment services for veterans. This results in an estimated cost of \$88,829 (\$65,000 for salary and \$23,829 for fringe) in FY 15, based on the cost of existing statewide coordinator positions.²

The bill also specifies that the pilot program must include grants from DOL to nonprofit housing agencies for specified purposes. As the bill does not appropriate any funding for these grants, the fiscal impact of this provision is dependent upon the specific amount of funds available and whether they are provided by the state.

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 36.66% of payroll in FY 15 and FY 16.

² Though the position established under the bill is for a pilot program, the bill does not specify whether the position would remain in DOL beyond FY 15. To the extent that it does, this cost would continue into the future.

Finally, the bill specifies that the Labor Commissioner (in consultation with the Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs) must develop criteria for grants provided under the bill, and approve or disapprove the hiring of job placement specialists hired using these grant funds. It is anticipated that these provisions would be accommodated by the state-wide coordinator established under the bill.

The Out Years

The program established under the bill is a pilot program, though no program end date is provided. To the extent the program remains beyond FY 15, the fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 213*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE VETERANS' OPPORTUNITIES PILOT PROGRAM.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes a veterans' opportunities pilot program within the Labor Department. The program must consist of (1) department grants to nonprofit housing agencies to hire job placement specialists trained to understand the employment challenges and advantages unique to veterans and (2) a statewide coordinator within the department to manage the network of employment services for veterans.

The bill requires the labor commissioner, in consultation with the veterans' affairs commissioner, to provide a report to the Housing, Labor, and Veterans' Affairs committees on the establishment, implementation, and results of the program. They must submit the report by January 1, 2015 and include any recommendations to change the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

ELIGIBLE GRANTS FOR NONPROFIT HOUSING

The labor commissioner, in consultation with the veterans' affairs commissioner, must develop eligibility criteria for a nonprofit housing agency to receive grants under the opportunities pilot program. The criteria must include:

1. the region the agency serves,
2. the demonstrated need of homeless veterans within such region for job placement,

3. the agency's ability to support and implement the work of a job placement specialist, and
4. other relevant factors.

Any agency receiving a grant under the program must, prior to offering employment to a job placement specialist, submit the prospective hire's resume to the labor and veterans' affairs commissioners, who have 10 business days to approve or disapprove the hire.

STATE-WIDE COORDINATOR

The labor commissioner, in consultation with the veterans' affairs commissioner, must designate a statewide coordinator to manage the network of employment services for veterans. The coordinator position is in the Labor Department, and the coordinator must provide monthly reports to the labor and veterans' affairs commissioners. The coordinator's duties include:

1. overseeing the work of the job placement specialists hired under the nonprofit housing grants program,
2. identifying and coordinating statewide employment specialists and job developers who work with veterans,
3. centralizing and facilitating job referrals,
4. organizing a network of employers who will hire and support homeless veterans or those at-risk of homelessness,
5. providing information to employers about resources and incentives available to those who employ veterans,
6. supporting efforts to automatically transfer military occupational certifications to the private sector, and
7. doing all that is necessary to provide homeless veterans and veterans at-risk of homelessness with effective employment

services.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 14 Nay 0 (03/11/2014)